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WRITTEN IN SAND.

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First produced at the Olympic Theatre, August 30th, 1884.

CHARACTERS.

Frank Seaton	Mr. H. VINCENT.
Fairfax Rendall	Mr. L. CAUTLEY.
Tom Potts	Mr. J. W. BRADBURY.
Kate Shirley	Miss EDITH JORDAN.
Sister Winifred	Miss A. MONTAGU.

SCENE—SHIRLEY GRANGE, YORKSHIRE.

TIME—THE PRESENT.

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WRITTEN IN SAND.

SCENE.—*A pretty garden, separated from a rural road at the back by a hedge or fence, in the centre of which is a small gate; beyond the road is a view of the sea; within the garden, towards the front, and at the* L. *side of the stage, is a picturesque porch; on* R., *garden table, two garden chairs, portfolio of drawing, sketching and other materials—easel, with sheet of cardboard,* R.C. ; *an old well,* L.C. ; *music to take up curtain;* TOM POTTS *discovered sitting on well.*

TOM. (*discontentedly*) This is dry work—beastly dry ; as dry as the Shakespeare Kate's lent me to read, or the old well here. Shakespeare's all very well for those who understand him, but I've only an average intellect, and prefer ratting (*looking down well*). I should fancy now there'll be a few of the vermin down here. (*pulls ferret from his pocket*) Hang me if we don't have an excursion and see, one of these fine days, my beauty. (*replaces ferret, and fills dirty-looking pipe. Enter* RENDALL, *who nods sullenly to* TOM) Wonder what sort of a humour Rendall's in ? I must have a drink, even if I'm reluctantly driven to milk. (*pleasantly to* RENDALL) Got change for half-a-sovereign, Rendall ?

REND. (*looking at him dubiously*) Yes, I think so.

TOM. Then lend us a couple of shillings, old man.

REND. I've no shillings to spare—(*aside*)—to you.

TOM. Well, then, a "tanner" will do. (*aside*) Anything but milk.

REND. I haven't a "tanner," as you call it.

TOM. (*desperately*) Well, then, have you any matches ?

REND. Yes—(*feels in pocket;* X *to* L.)—but they're at home.

TOM. Oh, I'll take a cab in the course of a week or two and call for 'em. (*aside, in disgust*) A fellow with three thousand a year and hasn't got a match on him.

REND. Where's Kate ?

TOM. (*pointing to porch*) Like your matches, at home. (*goes towards porch*) Well, I must have a light, that's very certain. I can get one in the kitchen, and I might manage

some beer there, too. No, I forgot, Uncle Shirley's had key taps put on all the barrels since I've come to live in the neighbourhood. (*going in*)

REND. I say, Potts, give Kate the intimation I'm here, will you?

TOM. I haven't got any intimations to spare. (*imitating* RENDALL'S *previous manner.*)

REND. Look here, Potts, rather than lead a lazy loafing life like you I'd kill myself.

TOM. Prussic acid kind of business, eh?

REND. No, I hate to rush anything. A slow death would suit me better.

TOM. Ah. Get married. (*Exit* R. 2 E.)

REND. I'm going to; but thank heaven, when I marry Kate I don't marry her relations, and I shall close my door against that particular relation at all events. Bah, the fellow's all idleness and alcohol. (*takes out cigar case*) It was careless of me to forget my match case. (*suddenly, somewhat flurried*) By Jove, if I should have left the locket about, too. (*excitedly*) That's all right. (*takes locket from waistcoat pocket*) Why do I keep it? The memory of an old miserable folly. (*opens locket; reads*) "To Fairfax Rendall, from Maud." Poor Maud! Yours was a fair face, sweet and pure, and good. Well, she wasn't the woman for this wicked world, and it isn't for me to regret now that she left it. (*Re-enter* TOM, *who smacks* RENDALL *on arm; trinket falls down well*) Confound you, you've made me drop my——

TOM. What?

REND. Match box.

TOM. That doesn't matter since you've left your matches at home.

REND. Go to the devil.

TOM. I've lights enough here, thank you.

REND. (*aside*) Ah, I wish all remembrance of her could have gone with it.

TOM. (*at well*) I'd try a ratting excursion down there if I could get rope enough.

REND. (*aside*) I wish you would, and hang yourself.

TOM. Bothered if I don't try it some time.

REND. (*uneasily*) Nonsense, you'll smash yourself.

TOM. (*very thoughtfully*) Then I should be broken Potts! Shouldn't I? I'm broken Potts as it is. I haven't got a penny, and the housekeeper says I can't have any milk until it's skimmed.

REND. Take my advice, and don't be foolhardy. (X R., *to house*)

TOM. Thank you; advice is very refreshing on a hot day.

I shouldn't have thought you'd really so much consideration for me.

REND. Well, you're Kate's cousin, and if anything happened to you our wedding, possibly, would have to be postponed. (*Exit in porch*, R.)

TOM. If anything happened to me, Kate would cry her eyes out—if I am a cad, if I do prefer horses to women, dogs to (*looking after* RENDALL) puppies, grooms to curates, and the bar-parlour of the "Three Jolly Butchers" to my Uncle Shirley's fancy drawing-room. A fellow can't smoke in a drawing-room. (*strikes match and is about to light his pipe when* KATE *enters*, L., *through gate and blows it out; angrily*) Now, look here, Rendall, if you do that again I'll strike——

KATE. Another match.

TOM. Why did you do that, Kate? (X *to* R.)

KATE. For fun.

TOM. You'd better take the box and enjoy yourself for the day, then.

KATE. No; have your pipe. You've as much right to smoke as I have to cry. A woman's trouble melts away in a woman's tears, as a man's bother is wafted to the winds in a man's 'bacca.

TOM. Bravo! You're a sensible girl, Kate. I like you, and always did. I'm not much in the warrior line, but hang it, Kate, I'd fight, I'd bleed, I'd die for you. Don't you believe me?

KATE. Oh, yes, I believe you; and how much do you want to borrow *this* time?

TOM. You *are* a sensible girl—so sharp and so blunt at the same time. Five shillings will do, thank you.

KATE. How do you spend your own money?

TOM. I give it to charitable institutions, of course.

KATE. Is the "Three Jolly Butchers" a charitable institution?

TOM. Yes, to those who thirst, as the soup kitchen is to those who hunger. Five shillings isn't much, and I'll pay you back in a day or so.

KATE. How long is "so"?

TOM. Then say in a day.

KATE. Your days are such long ones.

TOM. You can't grumble at that this jolly weather.

KATE. And what will you do with the money?

TOM. (*tragically*) Save my character from imminent ruin. I owe it to Charlie Spratt; it's a debt of honour.

KATE. A debt of skittles, you mean.

TOM. Well, if you're going to bully me I shall expect you to make it half a sovereign.

KATE. No, I can't find it in my heart to bully you. always was a foolish girl, and still am a foolish girl.

TOM. Why do you say that?

KATE. Because I like you—a very little.

TOM. Do you like me five-shillings-worth?

KATE. No, three-and-six is about the outside; but as I'r in a good temper I'll let you have the other eighteen-per north of affection in advance. (*gives him money*)

TOM. Thanks, no end; I will pay you back——(*sits*, R.)

KATE. In a day or so. I expect it will be a case of "so" agair

TOM. And if ever I can do anything for you, I'll do it, o try to do it, however difficult, even if it's to jump over th moon.

KATE. I shouldn't call that a very great thing for an ugl man to do in the service of a pretty woman, who has save (*mimicking tragically*) his character from imminent ruin.

TOM. What, not to jump over the moon?

KATE. Certainly not; a cow did that once.

TOM. A what?

KATE. Chorus, "Hey diddle, diddle, the cat and tl fiddle, the cow jumped over the moon."

TOM. Ah, that accounts for the milky whey.

KATE. Yes; but if you are very anxious to show you gratitude, do so by showing your manhood. Get a situatio go to some town where industry is in demand.

TOM. I prefer the country, fresh and light and buoyan It makes such a difference to my spirits being here.

KATE. And to papa's spirits also.

TOM. That's why he locks up the cellaret now. If I we to break it open?

KATE. Perhaps he'd lock you up also. Well, if you wo be useful, do something ornamental. Learn to paint.

TOM. Thank you. My complexion is just as I like it.

KATE. Or play?

TOM. I do—at skittles.

KATE. I mean the piano.

TOM. No; I once had a piano, but the fellows who can to see me used to take out the wires to clean their pip with. Don't bother me, Kate, that's a good girl. (*takes o ferret;* KATE *shrinks back*) I'm more happy as I am.

KATE. Take that horrid beast away. I'm frightened of i

TOM. You needn't be, he wouldn't harm you. He's very cleve

KATE. He's very nasty.

TOM. Clever folks generally are nasty.

KATE. You say that because you are not clever.

TOM. No, I don't. I say it because I'm not nasty.

KATE. But you *are*, if you won't oblige me in this.

TOM. You needn't be rough on a fellow. I don't often borrow five shillings.

KATE. You don't, it's generally *ten;* but I'll give you twice ten if you'll get rid of the animal.

TOM. Now, Kate, you know I'm hard up ?

KATE. Yes, when you have to beg five shillings to save your character from imminent ruin.

TOM. Very well, impoverished as I am, I wouldn't sell my ferret for the Crown diamonds, which I suppose would realise a very handsome sum at the pawnbroker's. No, you can stick to your poetry and your flowers, and your Dorcas meetings, and I'll stick to my little sweetheart (*enter* WINIFRED *from road*, L.) until it's exterminated every damned rat in the neigbourhood.

KATE. How dare you ? To swear before a lady is unpardonable. (*going towards gate—sees* WINIFRED); before *two* doubly so. (X. *in front of* TOM, R.)

TOM. I withdraw the expression. (*aside*) It'll come in useful another time, (*aloud*). You'll forgive me, Kate, eh ?

KATE. Tom, your conduct is very low.

TOM. Low, is it ? Then it's the more easily looked over. (*sits at well*)

WIN. Pardon me, I am a stranger here ; can you direct me to the village ?

TOM. (*overhearing, pointing*) You see that superior public-house there ?

KATE. No, the nearer way is by the church, but *he* doesn't know that way. You seem tired, let me offer you a seat.

WIN. You are very good. (X. *to* R. *and sits*)

KATE. I am sure you will pardon me, but you are one of the sisters from Sea-cove ; are you not Sister Winifred ?

WIN. Yes ; but how should you know me—know my name ? (KATE *gets to* R. *of table, puts knee on chair*)

KATE. Sisters Alice and Janet are both my friends, and they told me of the new worker who was coming to join them. You have been in France for some time, I believe ?

WIN. (*sadly*) Yes.

KATE. I trust that we shall be good friends.

WIN. I am sure of it. You are so unlike so many in this district, who deem our little constitution a mistake, and our work unnecessary and intrusive.

KATE. Why, I call your mission a glorious one, which, irrespective of the narrow distinctions of sect and creed, goes forth to make pale faces brighter, heavy hearts lighter, and sad souls happier in the world.

TOM. If it's so glorious why don't you join it ?

KATE. (*pointedly*) Because there's a heathen who will occupy all my time at home.

TOM. (*collapsing*) That's me.

WIN. You must not overrate me so lavishly. My motive for choosing this new life is less, I fear, the unselfish one of helping the poor around it than the consideration that it will be *personally* happier than the old one.

KATE. Has the old life, then, been a sad one?

WIN. Very, very sad; but I would rather not speak of it—rather not think of it.

KATE. Forgive me. What a thoughtless creature I am. I was meant for a nuisance, not a girl.

TOM. All right. Turn organ-grinder, or go round for the Income-tax.

KATE. If I did go round for the Income-tax, I shouldn't have to call on some objectionable people.

TOM. That's me again.

WIN. (*rising*) By the church you said?

TOM. She said by the church, but I stick to the public-house.

KATE. Yes, you do, as long as you have any money. (*to* WINIFRED) To which part of the village are you going?

WIN. I scarcely know, but I want the cottage of a man called Tyson.

TOM. (*impulsively*) I know him.

WIN. (*turning to him*) Do you?

TOM. Some. I differed from him the other day on a little point of principle, as to the state of the balance on a mutual quoit account, and we got to high words.

KATE. When *he* says *high* words, Sister Winifred, he means exactly the opposite.

TOM. He got the better of the argument, and knocked me down. (*to* WINIFRED) Is this man Tyson ill?

WIN. Yes, very ill.

TOM. (*awkwardly*) I suppose three shillings wouldn't be any good, would they?

KATE. (X. *at back to* L.; *aside*) I always said I liked that dear, bad, good cousin of mine.

WIN. Any good? Ah, sir, you don't know how far three shillings will go.

TOM. (*hastily*) Oh yes, I do, to half-a-pint. (*confused*) I mean, that is, five of 'em will be an improvement: here, you take four and ten. (*gives money*) Charlie Spratt may go to the devil—(*apologetically*)—that is, you know, he may if he likes.

WIN. You are too good.

TOM. Am I good enough to walk a little way with you? I

should like to have a look at poor old Tyson. I want to tell him he didn't hurt me—more than necessary

WIN. With much pleasure.

TOM. Would your basket be very much disgraced if I carried it for you? (WINIFRED *smiles, gives him her basket, and takes* KATE'S *hand in "Good-morning"*)

KATE. Good-morning. (WINIFRED *kisses her, and is going off with* TOM, *when* KATE *calls* TOM *to her*) Tom, you've not the money now to pay that debt of honour. (*with much seriousness*) Your good name is lost.

TOM. (*earnestly*) Do you think so?

KATE. (*earnestly*) No, it's brighter now than that of many a better man. You may kiss me if you like; you're only my cousin. (TOM *greedily kisses her*) Now go to your charity—by the church, remember.

TOM. All right. (*aside*) I can come back by the pub. (*hurries off*, R.U.E.)

KATE. What a glorious morning this is. Now, shall I stroll on the beach and mend my health, or stay at home and mend these horribly disreputable socks of Tom's? (*quietly*) If I go on the beach I may meet *him*. And I'm afraid I like to meet HIM—(*this with quiet emphasis*)—so much so that—I must stay at home with the socks. (*she sits to work; enter* RENDALL, R.) Ah, Fairfax,

REND. (*sulkily*) Good morning, Kate.

KATE. You look cross.

REND. (*back of table to* L.) I *am* cross.

KATE. Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Bad temper is a social sacrilege on a day like this. Why, even the sea gives up its murmuring this sweet morning.

REND. But I am not the sea.

KATE. No, but if you speak like that I shall begin to wish you were—with the tide—*going out!* What's the matter?

REND. I don't like you kissing Tom.

KATE. But Tom does, and I don't mind, so that's two to one. Tom's my cousin, and surely a girl may kiss her cousin, when she doesn't intend to marry him.

REND. You're not going to marry the postman, you'd better kiss *him*.

KATE. Any other sin I've committed?

REND. You know I don't like your acquaintance with those Sea-cove fanatics. You know you were speaking with one here but a minute ago. You know they only create disaffection and bad blood among the labourers, who are quite sufficiently educated and paid to be able to dispense with

both their homilies and their help. Why, the very poorest of the men have twelve shillings a week, you know.

KATE. I know that you are to be my husband; I know that man is the stronger and woman the gentler and weaker, but it is her very weakness which entitles her to immunity from unnecessary tyranny; and I know if you are going to dictate to Miss Kate Shirley in the present as to whom she is to know, what she is to do, and how she is to do it (*rises*), I can't quite see much comfort for Mrs. Fairfax Rendall in the future. (X. *to* L.)

REND. (*jokingly*) Then why be Mrs. Fairfax Rendall at all?

KATE. Because I've a soft heart, and pity your wretched bachelorhood.

REND. That's not the reason. (*sits on well*)

KATE. Then because I feel I ought to reward the excellent taste that makes you love me better than any other woman in the world.

REND. Indeed I do. (*sits on well*) As you do so love me, say this like my own true Kate.

KATE. (*seriously*) But I should not be your own true Kate if I did. It is no use blinding ourselves to the truth, that our union is not one of what the world calls "Love." Of mutual honour, admiration, respect in its highest phase—yes. Of love—no. My father dearly wishes the match, and, like a dutiful child, I obey him; and so long, Fairfax, as you are true to your honour, to your manhood, and to me, I pledge you my word—weak woman's though it be—to be faithfully your wife, and worthily the mistress of your house.

REND. Well, I suppose I shall have to be satisfied, though I've not got the genuine thing I would have of you. I ask for a whole love, and you only grant me two or three of the thousand sentiments that form a perfect love. I beg the orange, you only give me two or three of the pips.

KATE. Be thankful for small mercies, and guard them carefully. There's many a slip between the cup and the *pip*, you know.

REND. (*looking off*) Hallo! Who's that coming up the path?

KATE. Why, it's Mr. Seaton. I *am* glad. (*flurried*)

REND. But you have no business to be glad.

KATE. Not glad to meet one whom I shall be pleased to meet?

REND. What reason have you to be pleased?

KATE. The reason which makes every woman like to meet a [illegible] agreeable man, who has the rare gift of being

ɔ talk pleasantly and sensibly at the same time. That's like Mr. Seaton.
ND. That's why I don't. (*rises ; goes down* R.)
TE. But you don't know him.
ND. And I don't want to.
TE. But you shall, for I'll introduce you.
ND. Who is the fellow ?
TE. The fellow's a gentleman.
ND. You don't know that. (*sits*)
TE. Yes I do, for if he were not, papa, who's a judge of ticle, would never have introduced him to me. (*goes to* R.) Now, Fairfax, you'll be agreeable, won't you ? is, as agreeable as you can, and Mr. Seaton may be per-d to stay lunch.
ND. Oh, yes, I'll be agreeable—(*aside*)—and if Mr. n's staying lunch depends on my amiability—he won't

Enter FRANK, L. 2 E. ; *greets* KATE.

TE. Let me introduce you, Fairfax, to a new friend of -Mr. Seaton--Mr. Rendall. (*resumes her work, leaving ung men together*)
ANK. (*civilly offering his hand*) How do you do ?
ND. (*sulkily evading it*) How d'ye do ?
ANK. Thanks, I'm all right ; but you don't seem par-rly anxious about me. (*after an awkward pause*) Jolly

D. (*taking out newspaper*) Tolerable. (*another pause*)
NK. Any news ?
D. Don't know.
NK. Can't read, perhaps, without glasses ?
D. Yes ; I've fair eyesight.
NK. So have I. Do you know I fancy I've seen you , somewhere ?
D. Possibly—the world is little enough.
NK. Yes, almost too little for the largeness of some of abitants, isn't it ? I say, you seem hurt that I've seen fore. (*in mock apology*) I really couldn't help seeing fore, you know. I'm very sorry that I've seen fore, and (*severely*) if you are always as rude to a r as you are to me, I shall be very much sorrier to see ain. (*aside*) Why is he so offensive ? (*to* KATE) Is endall a friend of yours, Miss Shirley ?
E. Oh, yes—rather an intimate friend. You see, --
K. Fairfax ! I thought the name was "Rendall" !

KATE. Yes, Fairfax Rendall. "Fairfax" is the Christian name. (RENDALL *goes to door*)

FRANK. (*musingly*) He is a very intimate friend.

KATE. (*seeing* RENDALL *at porch*) Are you going in?

REND. Yes, I have to see your father on business (*rudely*) and there's nothing to stay out for. (*Exit* R. *in house*)

KATE. You think Fairfax a little brusque, perhaps.

FRANK. Oh, no, I don't. (*aside*) I think him damned rude. (*to* KATE) You have a charming place here, Miss Shirley.

KATE. You like it? I'm glad.

FRANK. I like it to covetousness.

KATE. Then I'm *not* glad. We are pleased when people admire our little house, but not when they want to run away with it.

FRANK. My larceny would be a very innocent one. It would only extend to the guilt of a sketch.

KATE. You are an artist?

FRANK. A bad amateur.

KATE. No, you're not a bad one. Bad amateurs never acknowledge their deficiencies. Come, begin your work at once. (*putting easel*) But you must have life in your sketch. I'll be the life, and be taken sitting on the dear old well.

FRANK. No, I'd rather not take you, (*aside*) in a picture. (X. *to* L. *to easel*)

KATE. That's candid, but unkind. Why do you object?

FRANK. Because you wouldn't see yourself, or anyone like yourself, in the painting. By rural request, I once attempted a landscape, with a milkmaid at work on her gentle cow in the foreground.

KATE. And were you successful?

FRANK. Not eminently. It seemed to be a matter of deep controversy amongst my critics as to which was the milkmaid and which the cow. No, Miss Shirley, I may be tempted to steal a canvas recollection of your pretty home, but I can take no such memory of you (*earnestly*) and I need none.

KATE. Then you may take the well without me, but you *must* draw the well. (*sits on well*)

FRANK. I'll draw the water too, if you like.

KATE. Unfortunately for your joke, there's no water in it. But it's not a dry subject for all that. There is quite a historical romance connected with it—a love story in the time of the war between Charles and his Parliament. Let me see. When was that?

FRANK. (*confused*) I'd rather not bind myself to dates.

KATE. Then let us say in the year something hundred and something a brave and knightly young Royalist, at a time

when this neighbourhood, this very house, was swarming with Cromwell's partisans, loved the daughter of a staunch Roundhead, whose house it was ; and, as our cherished story goes, each evening the young soldier stole through a subterranean passage connected with the well from his father's mansion—the ruined abbey close by—and by an ingeniously contrived ladder cut in the stone he would climb to the brink and hold sweet communion with the maid, who, needlework in hand, sat, as I do now, all unsuspected, listening to his woo-dom. (KATE *sits at well, and as* FRANK *arranges easel, traces with her parasol letters upon the gravel*)

FRANK. (*aside*) I wonder if *she* would listen to *my* woo-dom ? A few minutes ago I was full of courage to tell her what I *must* some time tell her, and now I feel as empty as the well itself.

KATE. (*aside*) How different he is from Fairfax ! I wish Fairfax were like him ! (*quickly*) I wish Fairfax were he ! (*impatiently*) Oh, this is childish, and foolish, and wicked.

FRANK. (*coming forward*) I don't feel like work this morning, Miss Shirley. (*notices* KATE'S *business with parasol*) Why, you also are doing an *al fresco* sketch upon the ground ?

KATE. (*quickly throwing her cloak over tracing*) No, no, like yourself, I am lazy this morning.

FRANK. (*as if about to pick up cloak*) Your wrapper will get damp upon the ground, Miss Shirley ?

KATE. (*checking him*) Oh, no—(*nervously*) ; besides, I prefer it damp.

FRANK. Ah, perhaps you're fond of rheumatism ?

KATE. (*a little uneasily*) What nonsense we're talking.

FRANK. I wonder what the lovers of your love story talked about years ago. I wonder if they talked nonsense ?

KATE. I suppose all lovers do.

FRANK. Let *us* talk nonsense. (*this hastily*, KATE *slightly turns from him*)

KATE. Better get on with your sketch, Mr. Seaton. Why, you ought to make quite an effective picture. Look at the sea, how pretty it looks.

FRANK. Yes, doesn't it—So blue, and calm, and deep, like—like—?

KATE. (*impulsively*) A man's eyes ; and yet sometimes so loud and angry, and restless, like—like——

FRANK. (*impulsively*) A woman's tongue. But that's only when the wind rises.

KATE. Yes, when it's like papa after a rest'ess night, and gets up bad tempered. (*pause*) I sometimes think the wind is married to the sea.

FRANK. What a funny fancy. Why ?

KATE. Because he so often blows her up.

FRANK. No; it's only your cold, cruel, cutting, heartless, east wind kind of a husband that does that sort of thing. There are husbands and husbands, you know. What of the bright, cheerful breeze that keeps its mate, the ocean, in perpetual ripples of happy laughter? Come, I won't have husbands slandered in this wholesale way.

KATE. Why, Mr. Seaton, by the enthusiastic manner in which you champion husbands you might be one yourself.

FRANK. No; but I want to be *your* husband. (*goes to her*) There, it's out at last; it's been pent up for the last week, and now it's come with a rush. You are not angry. I am really not used to this sort of thing, and I may not have done it properly. I assure you I never proposed before in my life. Tell me you are not angry.

KATE. No, not angry, but——(*both rise*)

FRANK. Don't let there be any "buts." Indeed I love you devotedly, awfully devotedly, and I came here this morning to tell you so, rightly or wrongly. I have thought when we have met and talked your face seemed happier, and your eyes brighter as you have listened. Don't tell me I have been wrong, or I think I shall go to the top of the cliffs there and throw myself over into the sea.

KATE. Mr. Seaton, you have pained me more than I can say. I can only give you one answer.

FRANK. (*pained*) You *have* given it me, Miss Shirley, but is it the answer of your heart? May there be hope for me in the future?

KATE. Neither my present nor my future is my own.

FRANK. You are engaged to Mr. Fairfax Rendall?

KATE. (*quietly taking up her cloak*) Yes. Pray excuse me; papa wants me. Good morning. (*goes towards house*)

FRANK. Yet you have thought of me more than you will tell me in words. (*sits on well*) Why, there, your hand has written my name in the sand.

KATE. I never thought what I did.

FRANK. (*obliterating tracing with his feet and speaking quietly*) No, you never thought what you did. Let the name be wiped out; it is easily done, for it is only written in sand. (*pause*)

KATE. I hope we shall always be good friends. (*offers her hand*)

FRANK. (*retaining hand*) Good friends (*rises*)—nothing more. But will you tell me this—Had you been free might you have spoken the sweet word of consent you may not speak now—can you say this?

KATE. Yes. (RENDALL *appears at porch, and on seeing them hand in hand, exhibits by-play of jealous emotion*)

REND. (X.L.) Damn it all! I'll stop this game. (*to* FRANK) The old gentleman—I mean of course, Mr. Shirley—would like a chat with you, Mr. Seaton. (*aside*) He didn't say so, but that's immaterial.

FRANK. I'll go to him at once. *Au revoir*, Miss Shirley. (*going off*) Written in Sand—only in sand. (*Exit*)

KATE. I shall see you at lunch, Fairfax. (*going off*)

REND. Yes. Where are you going?

KATE. To water my flowers.

REND. I'll fetch you some water.

KATE. No, don't trouble. (*aside, handkerchief to eyes*) I've quite sufficient water about my eyes. (*Exit*, R.)

REND. She seems upset. If that fellow Seaton's the cause of it, I'll upset *him*. (*looking at easel*) Paints, does he? If he's not careful, he'll have to exercise his artistic ability on one or both of his eyes. (*stands at easel*)

Enter TOM *and* WINIFRED *in road*, R.U.E.

TOM. Don't say goodmorning yet, Sister Winifred. Hang it, I'm only just beginning to feel at home with you. Come in and have another chat with Kate.

WIN. I fear I have scarcely time. (*aside, excitedly, on seeing* RENDALL) Great heavens! (*to* TOM, *quickly*) Who is that man?

TOM. Oh, that's Fairfax Rendall, Esquire. I'll introduce you if you wish, but I don't think you'll like him.

WIN. (*aside*) Here! here! He of all men in the world! What shall I do? (*to* TOM) Is he a friend of your cousin's?

TOM. A friend—he means to be her husband. (WINIFRED *starts in pain*) Come, I'll introduce you.

WIN. (*excitedly*) No. I must go—go at once.

TOM. But Kate will be awfully disappointed.

WIN. I will write to her—indeed, I must write to her; (*aside*)—but I dare not meet him. (*to* TOM) I can write at the cottage there, and if you will take my note I shall be very grateful.

TOM. Well, she has asked me to take something, that's more than Rendall has ever done; but there, I'd do anything for a friend of Kate's. (*Exit with* TOM, L.)

Enter FRANK, R.

FRANK. Mr. Shirley has just left the house.

REND. Well.

FRANK. Only I understood you he wanted to see me, that's all. (X. *to* L.)

REND. Very likely he did. He didn't say so, but you're

a friend of his, you know, and a man always likes to see his friends.

FRANK. (*aside, angrily*) If I were not *here*, at *her* home, I'd punish him for his insolence. (*resumes work at easel*)

REND. (*looking over him*) I don't think you'll ever make an artist. You're not cut out for one.

FRANK. Cut out! An artist is not a waistcoat.

REND. I mean, you don't look an artist; and I've a kind of theory that a man's appearance is a sort of index to his professional aptitude.

FRANK. May I ask *your* profession?

REND. Oh, I'm nothing at all.

FRANK. So far your theory holds good.

REND. What do you mean?

FRANK. (*hotly*) I mean, sir, that you cannot expect to continually insult me without some sort of resentment on my part. I am, here, Mr. Shirley's guest.

REND. And I am, here, Miss Shirley's affianced husband.

FRANK. I am aware of it, and you force me to say I am sorry for her.

Enter TOM, L. U. E.

TOM. Hallo! Seaton, old man, glad to see you.

FRANK. (*to* RENDALL) I have at least one friend in the household.

TOM. Does Kate know you're here? I know she'll be pleased you've come. She's constantly talking of you, isn't she, Rendall.

REND. How should I know?

TOM. Ah, how should you? I'd forgotten, she's too gloomy to say much about anything when you're about. (*aside*) He can put that in his pipe and smoke it, when he gets home to his matches.

FRANK. (*pleasantly, working all the time*) Turned postman, Tom?

TOM. I'd forgotten the note, it's for Kate. You look her up, old boy, and give it to her for me. She'd much prefer seeing you to—(*pointing to* RENDALL)—us poor ill-looking devils. (*offers letter*)

FRANK. With much pleasure.

REND. (*taking letter*) It would be a pity to interrupt your study. I will see that Miss Shirley has the note. (*Exit*, R. U. E.)

TOM. Look here, Seaton, do you like beer?

FRANK. (*laughing*) Now and again.

TOM. Well, I'm coming into some money some time. I'll stand half-a-gallon if you'll punch Rendall's head.

FRANK. What, make my head as bad as you'd have his? No—I think I shall have to decline the commission.

TOM. (*at well.* FRANK *intent on picture*) You think over it. (*watching* FRANK) Hang it, I wish, after all, I could do that sort of thing.

FRANK. Do you like sketching?

TOM. No, but it would please Kate if I tried my hand at something steady and respectable.

FRANK. Then why don't you? I'll teach you if you like.

TOM. That's jolly good of you, and I'll stand that half-gallon whether you punch Rendall's head or not. I used to learn drawing, you know. (X. *to* C.)

FRANK. (*giving him sheet and pencils*) Let me see whether you wasted your time or not. Try the house.

TOM. No, you're doing that, and it's scarcely big enough for two.

FRANK. Then have a shy at the old abbey ruins, down the lane. That will test your skill nicely.

TOM. All right. I used to be a dab at ruins. I'll make it a moonlight sketch, eh?

FRANK. Then you must wait till evening.

TOM. Not at all. I'll shove in a moon, if you'll lend me sixpence to shape it with.

FRANK. With pleasure. (*is about to give coin*)

TOM. Stay! Make it a shilling. Let's have a *full* moon.

FRANK. (*giving coin*) The pleasure is doubled.

TOM. Thanks; I'll give it you back in an hour or so. (*going off*) By Jove, it pays to be an artist. (*Exit,* R.U.E.)

FRANK. What a caution he is. I only wish I were half so light-hearted and happy. (*goes on with painting*)

Enter RENDALL *and* KATE, R.U.E., *with open letter.*

KATE. (*aside, indignantly*) No. There can be no mistake. There he is, still at the easel—she must mean him. Oh, the villain and impostor that he is!

REND. Kate, that letter's bothering you—what's the matter?

KATE. (*going to gate*) I'll tell you afterwards. *Now* you must do me a favour, quickly, and at once.

REND. Give your orders, my lady. (*touches his hat*)

KATE. You see Sister Winifred in the distance, there?

REND. I see one of the sisterhood women, certainly.

KATE. Then run to her and bid her to come here to me. Tell her I must see her.

REND. You know, Kate, my objections to these people.

KATE. You refuse me this little favour?

REND. No. I can refuse you nothing; but I confess I'm a jealous man, and don't like leaving you constantly with this Mr. Seaton.

KATE. You have no reason to be jealous of him now. *I* hate him!

REND. I'm off like a shot. But aren't you jealous of *me?* Aren't you afraid I shall get up a little flirtation with——

KATE. Sister Winifred? There is no coquettish heart in her. Her poor sad face will tell you that.

REND. (*aside*) She hates him. Well, I can afford to be civil to you now, Mr. Frank Seaton. (*Exit*, L. U. E.)

FRANK. You see, I'm going on with my felony. (*sees that* KATE *is engaged with letter*) I beg your pardon; I didn't see you were engaged.

KATE. In a moment. (*aside, fiercely*) Then I'll talk to you. (*looking at letter*) It is hard to believe, but here it is in black and white. Black and white! No, the story is all *black* against him. (*reads*) "I have just made a discovery which deeply affects the happiness of your life. I was married, almost a child, to a man whose sole interest in me was his anxiety to make my little fortune his own, and when this was squandered I became the victim of daily indignity at his hands. The end soon came, for I was stricken down by illness. I was in Paris at the time, and was borne to a hospital, only, as I thought, to die. And with the doctor's solemn words ringing in his ears, that I was surely entering the gate of death, my husband forsook me with a smile on his lips, and with joy in his heart." (*looking at* FRANK) Oh, you wretch. (*reads*) "And now I find that the man who is a welcome guest at your house, the man who affects to love you, is none other than my husband, whom I have prayed I might never see again. Believe me, this is no delusion, for I unmistakably recognised him not a moment ago at the easel in your garden.—Winifred." (*looking at* FRANK) Oh, you atrocious, irredeemable, double-dyed villain, and you thought to win my wealth too. Well, my fortune is my tongue, and you shall have it.

FRANK. There! (*showing sketch to* KATE) How do you think I'm getting on?

KATE. Very well. I wonder how it is, in this world rascality seems to succeed in everything.

FRANK. What a strange speech. I might misconstrue it into something very uncomplimentary.

KATE. It should only admit of *one* construction. Mr. Seaton, you are a bad, bad man.

FRANK. Am I? (*aside*) That blackguard Rendall has been at work. The sneak. (*to* KATE) I will submissively

bear anything you may choose to say against me.

KATE. Submissively! The servile sycophant often goes hand in hand with the abandoned villain.

FRANK. But the villain can't be altogether abandoned if the servile sycophant goes hand in hand with him. It's a bit rough, too, on the abandoned villain. (*aside*) She's chaffing me, and I'll fight her with her own weapons. (*replace picture*)

KATE. You see this letter?

FRANK. Certainly.

KATE. You may not believe me, but this letter is from *her*.

FRANK. (*puzzled*) Is it?

KATE. Yes, written by her a few minutes ago. She still lives.

FRANK. Are the people in these parts in the habit of dying directly after they've written a letter?

KATE. And she has *seen* you.

FRANK. (*puzzled*) Yes. What does she think of me?

KATE. (*aside*) He does not even flinch.

FRANK. And may I ask who "she" is?

KATE. Look at the letter. Do you know the hand?

FRANK. No; but it's a very nice hand—pretty, *petite*, and delicate. Like yours.

KATE. A man should know the handwriting of his wife.

FRANK. I'm in a fog altogether, Miss Shirley, as to what you're driving at.

KATE. Then let us go as far as Paris together.

FRANK. To the world's end with you.

KATE. I meant figuratively. Perhaps we may find the French atmosphere a little clearer, and you may be better able to see what I mean. You know Paris?

FRANK. Fairly well. It is a brilliant city.

KATE. Yet with its brilliance it has its gloom. It has besides its palaces and halls, its prisons and—(*emphatically*)—its *hospitals*.

FRANK. Of course, there are rogues everywhere.

KATE. Yes, *everywhere*. And it is often through them that its hospitals are filled.

FRANK. No, the prisons are for their accommodation. (*aside*) We're on a cheerful subject.

KATE. It is well that there are these good places—these *hospitals* for poor sufferers.

FRANK. (*in a matter of fact way*) Oh, it is.

KATE. Or what would become of——

FRANK. Fractured limbs and——

KATE. Crushed hearts; the crushed and weary hearts of

women cruelly and bitterly wronged, as (*hotly*) your wife was wronged by you.

FRANK. Please, *what* do you mean?

KATE. That I know all, and that your assumption of innocence is pitiful bravado, all the more audacious, blustered forth within a very stone's throw of your outraged and unhappy wife. (*goes up stage*)

FRANK. So I'm married. I wonder where the ceremony came off. Not in any church, for the rubric doesn't encourage the conduct of marriage without the presence of the bridegroom. I don't know how they work these things in the registry offices, but I think they ought to let a fellow have a say in the matter. I wonder if I've got any family. I must end this. (*to* KATE) Miss Shirley, if you've been enjoying a joke at my expense, you must confess I have stood your treat handsomely.

KATE. This is no joke, as *I* need not now explain.

Enter WINIFRED *hastily, followed a moment afterwards by* RENDALL.

WIN. Oh, *you* will protect me, will you not, out of the friendship you bear to our Sisterhood, out of the pity you must feel for a wronged woman?

REND. (*aside*) Nothing else for it. I must brazen this out.

KATE. (*putting her arm round her, and pointing to* FRANK) Stop, come near her if you dare, and I'll have you horse-whipped from the premises.

REND. (*to* KATE) Had I known that my commission was to go in chase of a demented woman, I should have hesitated before executing it.

WIN. (*clinging to* KATE) Indeed, indeed, I have told you the truth—that man is my husband.

KATE. Which man?

WIN. Fairfax Rendall.

FRANK. (*aside*) Then I'm not married after all. (*looking at* WINIFRED, *puzzled*) But I've seen her face before. It strikes me I've seen everybody's face before. Where was it—where? (*as if thinking*)

REND. Don't you think, Kate, the poor thing should at once be placed under proper care?

FRANK. Of course. It was on the Boulevards, in Paris, with you (*to* RENDALL), and you were quarrelling with her. That fact attracted especially my attention.

REND. Psha! It strikes me you're as mad as she is.

KATE. And both are as sane as I am. Mr. Fairfax Rendall, we wait your explanation.

REND. My explanation is an unqualified denial to a preposterous and idiotic assertion.

TOM. (*comes up well suddenly behind him*) Try again, Rendall.

KATE. Why, where on earth have you sprung from?

TOM. Nowhere *on* earth. I come *de profundis*, which is foreign language. And I've found something which will perhaps interest you, old man.

FRANK. A locket. (*goes up*)

TOM. The rummiest match-box I ever saw.

KATE. (*taking locket*) Let me see. (*reads*) "To Fairfax Rendall, from Maud."

REND. But her name is not Maud.

WIN. Unhappily, yes—Maud Rendall. Winifred is only my name in the Sisterhood.

REND. It's a lie.

KATE. But is Sister Winifred's picture here in the locket also a lie?

TOM. Not it. Truth *does* lie at the bottom of a well sometimes, it seems.

FRANK. But how did you get there?

TOM. I'm bothered if I know quite; but down at the abbey ruins, which are much too far gone for sketching purposes, I twigged a ratty-looking tunnel, and thought there'd be some fun for the ferret, so I explored it, and—well, here I am.

KATE. The subterranean passage I spoke of.

REND. Well, I'm run to earth.

TOM. It was all my ferret.

REND. But it's only fair to myself, Kate, to swear solemnly to you that I believed that woman dead.

TOM. I wish *you* were, and then I'd join the Blue Ribbon Army, and go in for your widow.

REND. (*to* WINIFRED) If you have come back from the jaws of the grave to claim the help of your husband, and the shelter of his house, you have come in vain. I hate you, and henceforth we are strangers.

WIN. I thank you for the kindest words you have spoken to me since we were married.

TOM. (*holding gate open*) Rendall, this isn't a very large garden.

REND. Good-bye, Kate. Say good-bye for the last time. I shall leave England. (*fiercely approaches* WINIFRED, *who shrinks from him.* KATE *interposes*)

KATE. (*to* RENDALL) Go—before——

TOM. I put my thick boots on.

REND. I have ever been accustomed to obey *you*. Kate, good-bye. (*goes off* L., TOM *offering him lighted match as he goes*)

WIN. And now I must say adieu.

KATE. Indeed, you shall not ; you are not fit, after this shock, to leave yet.

WIN. If my husband keep his promise to leave England, I shall stay and work in this sweet neighbourhood so long as I am spared.

TOM. Bravo, Mrs. Rendall, we ll work together.

WIN. Not if you call me by that name.

KATE. (*taking her hand*) How *shall* we call you ?

WIN. Let it be Sister Winifred—always Sister Winifred.

FRANK. May I say good-bye also, Miss Shirley ?

KATE. (*nervously*) Not until I have told you how stupid and wrong I've been, and how I wish you would stay, and—and——

FRANK. And——

KATE. And finish your sketch.

FRANK. And what will you do for me in return ?

KATE. Perhaps write your name again.

FRANK. (*pointing to path*) But not there, Kate. Let it this time be engraved lastingly, ineffaceably, upon your *heart*, and not, sweetheart mine,

WRITTEN IN SAND.

CURTAIN.

MUSIC OF BURLESQUES, OPERAS, AND DRAMAS TO LOAN.

NOTE.—Piano and vocal parts are marked p.v. The figures in columns denote the PRICE per MONTH.—DEPOSIT: TWO MONTHS' HIRE (or double the following amounts is required) in the first instance as the deposit, half of which will be returned if the music be sent back within the month. No music can be loaned for less than one month. The deposit does not cover the cost of the music.

Acis & Galatea, Plowman, burl.p.v.	20	0
Adopted Child, p.v.	7	6
Agreeable Surprise, opera, p.v.	2	6
Aladdin [Miss Keating] burl. p.v.	5	0
Aladdin [Byron] burl. p.v.	20	0
Ditto, 8 band parts	15	0
Alcestis, burl. p.v.	10	6
Ali Baba [Miss Keating] burl. p.v.	5	0
Ali Baba [Byron] burl. p.v.	20	0
Ditto, 8 band parts	15	0
All at C, p.v.	7	6
Alonzo the Brave, burl. p.v.	20	6
Ditto, 9 band parts	15	0
Anchor of Hope, 9 band parts	7	6
As you like it, 9 band parts	7	6
Ashore and Afloat, dra., 10 b. pts.	10	0
Atalanta, p.v.	10	0
Austerlitz, 7 band parts	5	0
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Babes in the Wood [Byron] bur. p.v.	20	0
Bandit of the Blind Mine, 5 b. pts.	5	0
Bare-faced Impostors, farce, p.v.	5	0
Battle of Hexham, p.v.	3	6
Beauty and Beast [Keating] p.v.	5	0
Beauty and the Beast [Planché] p.v.	7	6
Beggars' Opera, p.v.	3	6
Black-Eyed Susan, d., 8 band pts.	7	6
Ditto, p.v.	5	0
Black-Eyed Susan, burl. p.v.	20	0
Ditto, 9 band parts	20	0
Blue Beard, drama, p.v.	5	0
Blue Beard Repaired, p.v.	30	0
Blue Beard [Byron's] burl. p.v.	15	0
Ditto, 6 band parts	10	0
Blue Beard [Miss Keating] p.v.	6	0
Bombastes, p.v.	7	6
Ditto, 8 band parts	7	6
Bride Lammermoor, dr., 5 bnd. pts.	7	6
Brigand, score and 3 band parts	7	6
Brown and the Brahmins, burl. p.v.	15	0
Brother and Sister, opera, p.v.	5	0
Bottle Imp, dra., 1 & 2 violin, basso	3	0
Cabinet, opera, p.v.	3	0
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